

Message Text

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62

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AGR-20 RSC-01 AID-20 EB-11 AF-10 ARA-11 EA-11

EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 SS-14 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-09 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-12 PRS-01 COME-00 HEW-08

IGA-02 OMB-01 RSR-01 /195 W
----- 012586

R 091705 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7717

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

AMEMBASSY NAIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS ROME 1896

FODAG

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: AORG, UN, SWEL

SUBJECT: SAHELIAN ZONE DROUGHT

REF: A) NOUAKCHOTT 0157; B) USUN 764; C) USUN 769

1. FOLLOWING IS INTERNAL DIRECTOR- GENERAL' S BULLETIN OF MARCH
5. ESTABLISHING INTER- DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP ON PROBLEMS
OF SAHELIAN ZONE.

2. " THE PROLONGED DROUGHT IN THE SAHELIAN ZONE OF AFRICA
HAS CREATED AN ACUTE EMERGENCY SITUATION WHICH AFFECTS LARGE
AREAS OF CHAD, GAMBIA, MALI, MAURITANIA, NIGER, SENEGAL AND
UPPER VOLTA.

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3. THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED ARE MAKING ALL POSSIBLE EFFORTS TO COPE WITH THE SITUATION AND LARGE AMOUNTS OF FOOD AID ARE BEING MADE AVAILABLE BY BILATERAL DONORS AND THE WFP. THERE REMAINS A MAJOR THREAT TO LIVESTOCK, THE BASIC RESOURCE OF THE NOMADIC POPULATIONS OF THE ZONE. AN FAO MISSION JUST COMPLETED TO MALI, NIGER AND UPPER VOLTA HAS ESTIMATED A LIKELY DEATH TOLL OF OVER TWO MILLION HEAD OF CATTLE IN THOSE THREE COUNTRIES ALONE UNLESS EMERGENCY FEED ASSISTANCE CAN BE PROVIDED. THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA HAS JUST APPEALED TO THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED TO DECLARE THE ZONE A 'DISASTER AREA'.

4. IN AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR, FAO IS TAKING THE LEAD IN PROMOTING FURTHER INTERNATIONAL ACTION WORKING IN CLOSE CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER INTER-GOVERNMENTAL BODIES AND WITH THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED. TO THIS END JOINT ACTION WITH THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM AND UNDP IS ALREADY UNDERWAY. IN ORDER TO MOBILIZE ALL AVAILABLE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE, AND TO ENSURE AN INTEGRATED APPROACH BY THE ORGANIZATION, AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP ON PROBLEMS OF THE SAHELIAN ZONE IS HEREBY ESTABLISHED AT HEADQUARTERS. THE IDWG WILL CO-ORDINATE ITS WORK WITH THAT OF THE REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA, WHERE ACTION IS ALREADY UNDERWAY UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE. WHILE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE IDWG ARE LEFT FLEXIBLE, AND WILL NECESSARILY EVOLVE AS THE SITUATION FOR EMERGENCY ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENTS / CONCERNED BY FAO/ (SIC.) OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND BILATERAL AID PROGRAMS. IT WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR BACKSTOPPING THE INTER-DISCIPLINARY TASK FORCE WHICH IT IS PLANNED TO STATION IN THE AREA. IT WILL ALSO MAKE PROPOSALS FOR AN INTEGRATED LONG-TERM APPROACH TO AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA, WITH A VIEW TO MINIMIZING THE EFFECT OF RECURRENT DROUGHT.

5. THE DIRECTOR OF THE AREA SERVICE DIVISION (DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT) WILL SERVE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE IDWG. THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS/ DIVISIONS ARE INVITED TO NOMINATE REPRESENTATIVES, PREFERABLY STAFF MEMBERS WITH A KNOWLEDGE OF THE SAHELIN ZONE OR OF SIMILAR ARID AREAS OR WITH PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN DROUGHT RELIEF WORK: LAND/ WATER, ANIMAL, PLANTS, AGR.
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SERVICES, FORESTRY, RURAL INSTITUTIONS. THE CHAIRMAN OF

THE IDWG WILL NOTIFY OTHER UNITS OR PROGRAMS WHEN MATTERS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST TO THEM ARE GOING TO BE DISCUSSED; PARTICULAR REFERENCE IS MADE TO THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, THE OFFICE OF INTER- AGENCY AFFAIRS, THE INVESTMENT CENTER AND THE INFORMATION DIVISION. ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING MADE FOR A FULL- TIME TECHNICAL SECRETARY TO BE AVAILABLE.

6. EVEN IF SOME SACRIFICE OF NORMAL COMMITMENTS IS REQUIRED, DEPARTMENT HEADS AND DIVISION DIRECTORS ARE REQUESTED TO ENSURE THAT STAFF ARE RELEASED AS NECESSARY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK OF THE IDWG. THIS IS AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR RESPONSE IS LIKELY TO INFLUENCE DIRECTLY THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE STRICKEN POPULATIONS". VOLPE

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